DOINA RUȘTI - Romanian Novelist | Biography and Literary Profile

With a substantial body of work and a distinctive literary imagination, Doina Ruști is a Romanian novelist with a wide international readership, with 40 titles translated into 18 languages. She has received numerous literary awards, and her work is studied in schools and universities.

She is known for combining the fantastic with stark social realism. Her landmark novel is *The Ghost in the Mill*(*Fantoma din moară*, Polirom, 2008), a powerful work of fiction about Romanian communism, widely acclaimed by critics and discussed in academic studies and volumes published by Routledge and Zittaw Press.

The same area of fiction includes *Ferenike* (Humanitas, 2025) and *Nas de bulgar* (Humanitas, 2026).

In her Phanariot trilogy — *The Phanariot Manuscript*, *The Book of Perilous Dishes*, and *Homeric* — Doina Ruști reconstructs the imaginative world of eighteenth-century Balkan Bucharest in an original, richly fabulatory mode. *The Book of Perilous Dishes*, the most widely translated novel in the trilogy, was published in English in London in 2022, recommended by Amazon booksellers, and featured by the Historical Novel Society.

Among her best-known books is *Lizoanca at the Age of Eleven* (*Lizoanca la 11 ani*, Trei, 2009), a novel about childhood and moral degradation in a small Romanian village. Its style was compared by *Il Libero* to Camus's *The Plague*, and the novel has been included in the doctoral programme of the University of Barcelona.

Doina Ruști has published ten other novels, among the more recent being *Zavaidoc in the Year of Love* (2024), *Occult Beds* (2020), and two successful YA novels, *Platanos* and *The Wild Girl*.

Her most recent novel is *Matuf, the Wigmaker* (Humanitas Junior, 2026).

Her distinctions include the Bucharest Writers' Association Award (2007), the Romanian Writers' Union Prize for Prose (2008), the Ion Creangă Prize of the Romanian Academy (2009), and the Hungarian Writers' Prize in Budapest for the Best Translated Book (2018).

She is a university professor specializing in the history of culture and world civilization.

Marco Dotti: "Her writing has two defining qualities: depth and the sweetness of storytelling."

A monographic study devoted to her entire body of work: Pompilia Chifu, *Doina Ruști, a Character in Her Own Book*(2025).

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